

# *SRC Energy Update*

**By Senator Jim Honeyford, Ranking Republican Member  
Senate Water, Energy & Telecommunications Committee**

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Dear Friends,

It's that time of year when our thoughts turn to our faith, family and friends.

The chill in the air and the snow on the ground also remind us that for many Washingtonians, this is also the time to think about expensive heating and fuel bills.

The market has worked and reduced the price of oil and gasoline, but, unfortunately, many in Olympia are planning expensive, job-killing environmental measures that have never been proven to reduce energy costs or protect the environment.

In fact, the governor's Climate Action Team (CAT) has recently released its recommendations for the state, and they don't inspire a lot of faith in the direction our state is going. The recommendations are deeply flawed, destructively expensive, and offer nothing that has ever been shown to have an impact on climate.

We Senate Republicans support environmental proposals aimed at promoting new technologies to increase energy efficiencies, reducing fuel and heating costs, creating jobs, boosting national security and -- most importantly -- respecting individual choice and personal freedom.

By contrast, this amazingly complex and costly series of proposals from the governor's team focuses on the state controlling the lives and choices of citizens, and regulating and taxing businesses to the point extinction.

In this edition of the Senate Republican Caucus' *Energy Update*, we examine the CAT recommendations and address some of the latest environmental policies and proposals that directly affect you, your job and your freedom.

Sincerely,



# State climate task force releases recommendations

## *Climate Action Team report expensive, flawed, and not believable*

Washington's Climate Action Team (CAT), created by Gov. Christine Gregoire, recently released its 2008 recommendations for how the state can better fight global warming. The massively complex agenda touches on “green buildings,” transportation, waste handling, and the state's Environmental Policy Act. That act requires state agencies to weigh the environmental impacts of new proposals before approving or denying them.

Some of the recommendations include the development of expensive, new mass transit projects and new tolls to pay for them.

My colleague, Sen. Jerome Delvin, R-Richland, is a member of the governor’s Climate Action Team. He says the team’s final report, released quietly before the Thanksgiving holiday, is deeply flawed, destructively expensive and simply not believable. Delvin has written a minority report calling for fundamental changes in the approach to climate change.

“I strongly disagree with many of the CAT recommendations,” Delvin said. “First, they want to limit the number of miles people can drive, yet they don’t differentiate between those who can elect to drive less and those who must drive a certain distance for their work. Trucking companies, stores making deliveries, commuters, salespeople working a territory – they have no choice. Taxing them will only raise the cost of goods and services for all of us, and especially hurts the poor. Instead, I suggest we offer strong incentives for using transit and electric and hybrid vehicles.”

The minority report outlines Delvin’s major concerns with the CAT recommendations. It also suggests alternatives to expensive and punishing mandates.

“The CAT recommendations will cost Washington citizens and businesses a small fortune,” Delvin said, “Since the report has no cost-benefit analysis, we have no idea how this will affect our jobs and economy. We also don’t even know if it will have any effect on greenhouse gases.”



## EPA may tax cow “emissions”

The federal government may soon be taxing the gas that comes out of cows. The Environmental Protection Agency is considering broadening the parameters of its permitting laws to include dairy farms. If amended, the law would force farmers to pay for the methane gas each of their animals releases into the environment. The Farm Bureau estimates that dairy farmers could end up paying **\$175 for every dairy cow** they own. The EPA says that price estimate is incorrect, but failed to provide an estimate of its own.



# The next miracle bio-fuel

**Is a plant that secretes oil and eats carbon the answer to our energy and environmental woes?**

Is it better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all? Bio-fuels have not been feeling the love lately, especially from an environmental movement that once touted alternative fuels as an answer to both energy independence and the environment.

The first-generation biofuels, which are made from corn, soybeans, sunflower seeds and rapeseed, were rejected by many in the environmental movement because they use valuable agricultural land and drive up demand and prices for grains, causing food shortages.

Brazilian sugar-based ethanol, which was originally thought to be a more feasible and efficient fuel than grain seed-based bio-fuels, is coming under similar attacks. Many believe sugar ethanol is resulting in deforestation in developing countries, especially the Brazilian rainforest.

Earlier this year scientists from the European Environment Agency urged the European Union to drop its 10 percent bio-fuel target for road transport fuels.

Despite these recent setbacks, alternative fuels researchers have new reason for hope. Algae, a simple organism that comes in hundreds of strains, can be genetically modified to produce a variety of fuels. It also could be blended into diesel and gasoline and, perhaps one day it could actually replace petroleum-based diesel and gasoline.

Boeing has emerged as one of the leaders in the effort to develop algae-based fuel and was influential in creating the Seattle-based Algal Biomass Organization.

While most of the interest in developing algae farms has focused on southern California and Arizona, it's possible to grow algae anywhere, including Washington.

In addition to be a renewable fuel source, algae can also be used to reduce carbon. Carbon dioxide emissions can easily be used as plant food to help grow algae.





## Did you know?

This year is set to be the coolest since 2000, according to a preliminary estimate of global average temperature released by the United Kingdom's Met Office. The global average for 2008 should come in close to 14.3C/57.7F, which is 0.14C/0.21F below the average temperature for 2001-07.

## Ecology water quality inspectors to begin ticketing

Beginning this month, Washington Department of Ecology water quality inspectors can issue field tickets for water quality violations they see during inspections of sites covered by the state's Industrial Stormwater, Construction Stormwater, and Sand & Gravel General permits.

Selected inspectors will have authority to issue \$500 to \$3,000 field tickets.

Recipients are required to pay field ticket fines and confirm with Ecology that they have fixed the problem.

For more information, see Water Pollution Tickets at:  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/enforce.html>.

## Obama on cap & trade

In shocking audio made public only hours before the election, president-elect Barack Obama admits his cap-and-trade proposals will "bankrupt" the coal industry, cost jobs and make electricity prices "skyrocket."

In a radio interview on January 17, 2008, with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Sen. Obama described his energy plan, saying "So if somebody wants to build a coal-powered plant, they can; it's just that it will bankrupt them because they're going to be charged a huge sum for all that greenhouse gas that's being emitted."

In another clip from the same interview, Obama goes even further, stating, "Under my plan of a cap and trade system, **electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.**"

You can listen to Obama for yourself here: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1T\\_ndTarALI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1T_ndTarALI).



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